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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

January, 1953 No. 6

(Note: This material is strictly confidential and is definitely not for publication)

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I A Report on the Christian Response to Communism in India

II A Report on the Situation of the Church in China

III An Important Book on the Christian Attitude Toward Communism

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A REPORT ON THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO COMMUNISM IN INDIA

(from a Correspondent)

This report is based largely on the information and impressions gained during a recent tour of India. An Indian colleague, and I visited Nagpur, Hyderabad, Madras, Bangalore, Travancore, Kolhapur, Poona, Bombay and several places in Uttar Pradesh in an attempt to find out at first-hand something of what Christians are thinking and doing in response to the growing appeal and strength of Communism. Although our trip was hurried, and our observations far from complete, we did have opportunities to talk with Christians of widely differing political persuasions and to learn something about the social and spiritual conditions which make India such a fertile field for Communist propaganda. Our report sketches the response of Christians to Communism in three different areas of India, and includes an evaluation of Communist strength and strategy in India today, and some general conclusions to be drawn from the present situation.

TRAVANCORE

Not far from the bus stand at Quilon we passed a small open-front store of the type found in any Indian bazaar. On three sides the entrance was framed with colourful religious placards - 'The Lord is My Shepherd', 'Underneath are the Everlasting Arms', 'Rest in Peace' while in the centre of the store, propped up on a chair so that it could be seen by all who passed by, beamed a large and gorgeously-tinted portrait of Stalin in his most beatific mood. Nothing could have more vividly symbolized the spiritual condition in Travancore today. Christians, and the signs of Christian piety, are evident everywhere. Nearly one-third of the population of Travancore-Cochin State is Christian by profession. Churches, shrines, pious placards and medallions, fishing boats named 'John the Baptist' or 'The Holy Trinity' - these and other evidences of a Christian 'culture' are only too obvious. Yet we could not help but be aware that, for the time being at least, the initiative in Travancore lies in the hands of revolutionary groups, the strongest and most aggressive of whom are the Communists.

We had an occasion to see something of Communist strength when we visited a coir factory in Alleppey, the chief industrial town of Travancore. Shortly after we arrived all of the workers in the plant assembled in the main courtyard and spent fifteen minutes shouting slogans under the direction of a trained organiser. We learned that such demonstrations, which went on regularly twice each day, were directly contrary to the factory laws, but that no one, the police included, was willing to do anything to stop them. (As our guide remarked, "The police know tomorrow they may have to work for a Communist government"). Of the total number of workers in the plant - more than half of whom were Christians - some 95% belonged to the Communist Union. It was obvious why Communists could make such an appeal. The workers, many of them women, each received Rs. 2/- or less per day, and most of them had employment for only one or two days a week. The manager and his top assistant, all of them British, received salaries from Rs. 1,000 - 3,000 per month, and large annual bonuses in addition. We were told that this contrast in the scales of pay for workers and managers held true for both Indian and foreign-owned plants. Later we had an opportunity to see some of the homes in which the coir workers lived. These were tiny thatched huts set in the midst of coconut groves, with no sanitary provisions and no water supply except shallow wells dug in the sand.

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In addition to organising the workers, the Communists concentrate their attention on the students. At the Government College in Alleppey there is a full-time Communist worker, and the Communist students are so well organised that for several years they have controlled the college elections. The same is true in other colleges and in the University at Trivandrum. Each new student is carefully indoctrinated - first with literature on "Reason" and "Science", then with a more direct attack on religious faith of any kind, and finally with material on the Marxist understanding of society, history and human life. (A Christian student told us that he was openly ridiculed by his fellow-students whenever they saw him in the company of a priest.) Many students become active Communist workers, and some reach high positions in the Party soon after leaving college.

There is a great deal of evidence that Communism's appeal lies in its answers, however false and inadequate they may be, to deep spiritual needs. The leadership of the Party is selected from unstable intellectuals, unemployed college graduates, and others whose lives are for the most part frustrated and meaningless. Travancore has the highest literacy rate in India - and also one of the highest rates of unemployment. (When a Christian college in Tiruvalla recently announced that it needed two messenger boys, more than a hundred young men applied - including 27 college graduates.) It is worth noting also that the greatest number of Travancore Communists come from the Ezhava community, a reformed Hindu group numbering some 800,000 members. More than fifty years ago it did away with idolatry and other superstitions and became a humanistic sect. Today many of its members have accepted Communism as a "substitute religion".

Communist literature is available everywhere and at a price to suit all pockets. Most of it is in Malayalm, and it includes short stories, dramas, and songs as well as books and pamphlets on Marxism and the Communist Party. All of these are designed to heighten the feeling of class conflict, and to break down traditional loyalties to the State, the family and religious institutions. A friend showed us a booklet entitled "Christ in Moscow". The Hindu author quoted passages on social justice from Isaiah, Amos and the New Testament, drew parallels between the sufferings of the early Christians and those of the Communists, and closed with the statement that if Christ were alive today he would be a Communist. So far as we could tell, the least expensive books were those put out by the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow. (A biography of Stalin, printed on excellent paper and with several illustrations, sold for 9 annas.) The Communist Party of India receives these free and post-paid, and is able to raise a portion of its budget by selling them throughout the country.

During the General Elections the Communists formed a United Democratic Front which included, besides the Communists, two smaller revolutionary parties and several 'independent' candidates. This group now controls 39 seats in the Travancore-Cochin Legislative Assembly. The Congress Party won only 44 seats, but with the help of a splinter Congress group it can count on 52 votes. The balance of the 108 seats are held by 12 Socialists and a few independents. We were told by a Congress M.L.A. that on nearly all issues the Congress has an assurance of 66 votes. The present Chief Minister and one other Minister are Christians. There are 26 Christians among the Congress M.L.A.s, and 12 of the M.L.A.s in the United Front are from among the Christian community.

We were not able to obtain figures on the number of Christians who have joined the Communist Party, but they have contributed a good deal of its leadership in Travancore. Most of the Christians who join the Party are from the Roman Catholic Church. In many cases they sever all church connections, but frequently they

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remain as nominal members. This situation has given rise to some curious anomalies. Recently a leading Mar Thoma Communist married a Roman Catholic Communist. Their marriage was performed by a priest in a Roman Catholic Church, after the couple had promised to have their children baptised and raised as Catholics. We heard that prior to the General Elections some Roman Catholic Bishops had threatened to excommunicate those who supported the United Front candidates. Yet, so far as we could learn, no one had been excommunicated, although thousands of Catholics are members of Communist unions and strong supporters of the Party.

We spent two hours one afternoon talking with a layman of the Church of South India who for several years has been a Communist sympathizer, if not a full Party member. A friend of his had suggested that we ask him how he was able to maintain his position both as a Communist and as a Christian. We found him a bit wary at first, especially about talking to an American. "Do you love the Soviet Union or hate it?" was his first response to my questions, followed by, "What are you Americans doing in Asia - experimenting with bacteria on us blacks?". But after some preliminary sparring, he was willing to discuss his views. "I am a Communist", he said, "because India needs radical economic changes and the Communist Party is the only group which can bring them about." When we asked about the relation of this with Christianity, his answer was that religion and politics are two separate spheres of life. "There is no such thing as Christian engineering," he said, "for Christianity and engineering are two distinct things. The same is true for Christianity and politics". I pointed out that Communism is more than simply a political movement, for it demands the complete loyalty of its adherents. He admitted that this was true, but said that in warfare one must obey the commander. We both insisted that a Christian cannot give his complete loyalty to anything or anyone other than Christ, but I am not sure that our statements made much impression on him. At the end of our conversation he apologised for having been rude and invited us to come to see him again.

Although so many Christians have either joined or actively supported the Party, it is clear that the majority of Christians in Travancore are not pro-Communist. Most voted for the Congress, and a considerable number of those with left-wing political views supported the Socialists who have consistently refused to cooperate with the Communists.

We were told by many people that the large vote for the United Front was an indication of anti Congress rather than pro-Communist views. In Tiruvalla, where the headquarters of the Mar Thoma Church are located, the majority of Christians supported the Congress candidate, a Christian from the backward classes, rather than the Communist candidate, a Syrian Christian with high social connections in the town. (One of the reasons for this was that the Mar Thoma Metropolitan publicly urged the members of his Church to support the Congress nominee). The Roman Catholics have formed an Anti-Communist Front which, unfortunately, is little more than the name indicates, for it seeks only to counter propaganda with propaganda. It has the support of some Hindus as well as of many Christians.

So far as we could tell, the real problem is to arouse among Christians a sense of social justice. The Syrian Christians are, on the whole, well-to-do and extremely conservative. They form an in-grown, class-conscious group, reluctant to admit members of other communities into their church or social life. Many of their leaders are concerned about evangelism, but are not alive to the need for social change. We had a long discussion one evening with a Mar Thoma priest. When we asked him whether Communism appealed to many of his parishioners, he shook his head. "After all, what is Communism?" he said, "let it come. God will look after us." "Do you feel that Christians have a responsibility for social justice?" we asked. "We need

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The signs of greatest hope are among Christian youth groups. We talked with youth leaders of the Church of South India and the Mar Thoma Church and found them actively engaged in the task of rousing Christians to tackle social evils both within the churches and in society as a whole. All of these leaders are well acquainted with Communism, for many of their friends and relatives are members of the Party. They are convinced that unless Christians do something positive in political and social life, they will lose the initiative entirely to the Communists. Recently they called together a group of 15 young Christian writers for a consultation on how best to present Christian ideas and concerns through short stories, poems, dramas and newspapers articles. They have held a number of study conferences on Christian political responsibility, and on the challenge of Communism.

ELENGANA

Telengana is the name given to the Telegu-speaking districts of Hyderabad State which lie to the east of Hyderabad City and border on the Andhra districts of Madras. It is a name with many emotional overtones in Indian political life, for it was here that the Communists attempted during the years 1947-50 to set up an Indian counterpart to Mao's stronghold in Yenan. In late 1948, after Hyderabad was taken over by the Union government, the Communists were so strong that in some districts they seized land and set up small-scale soviets. For nearly two years more they bitterly fought the Indian police and carried on wide-spread indoctrination of the peasants. They carried on most of their activities at night, hiding in the jungles or hills during the day. Their tactics included having one or more spies in each village to report on the misdeeds of landlords or merchants; sending warning letters to those whom they wished to check; surrounding a village at night and killing landlords or those suspected of being police informers; looting the wealthy of money and jewels (which they kept) and of grain (which they distributed among the poorer villagers). We were told that the Communists had never attacked or shown disrespect to women, and that they had often joined the villagers during the day and helped them with their work. Their indoctrination consisted largely in 'enlightening' the villagers - opening their minds to the conditions of poverty and injustice under which they lived. The police, on the other hand, were concerned mainly with restoring property and punishing those suspected of collaborating with the Communists. As a result, the poorer villagers had more confidence in the Communists than in the police. In 1950, shortly before the General Elections, the Communists openly renounced their programme of violence and, under the name of the People's Democratic Front, won landslide victories in Telengana and Andhra. Today they are campaigning vigorously for the distribution of land to the peasants, and for the formation of a Telegu-speaking province, comprising Telengana and Andhra, in which they would have almost complete political control.

We visited Telengana as the guests of an Indian pastor who had lived in the area for several years and was well acquainted with the local Communists. He took us one evening to visit the M.L.A. of the district, a man by the name of G. who eight years ago left his post as a University lecturer to join the Communist Party. Until shortly before the elections he worked underground at the head of an armed gang.

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When the Party's tactics changed, he was put up as the People's Democratic Front candidate and won by a large majority over his Congress rival. G. was most cordial and invited us to meet six PDF workers who were seated around a lantern on the floor of the small office. For the next hour and a half we discussed Communist policy on land reform, linguistic provinces and religion. With regard to the last of these, G. said, "The Party's aim is food, shelter and clothing for all - and we do not worry about a man's religion, except where religion is used as an excuse to support reactionary social practices". He told us that he had a high respect for Christians because they served the poor. "Communists and missionaries are doing much the same work," he said, "you and I can travel a long way together - and leave the problems of philosophy until later". I questioned this and said that I did not see how a Christian could be a Communist because the Communist owes his complete loyalty to the Party. To which G. replied, "My loyalty is to the people, not to the Party". "But the Party is the vanguard of the proletariat", I quoted, "and it alone knows what is right". G. smiled, but did not challenge the point. He then asked whether I thought the Dean of Canterbury was a Christian. (Incidentally, the good Dean must be one of the most popular people in Asia today). My reply was that the Dean, while doubtless an honest man, was naive and did not consider all the facts. I then asked what the Communists were doing now to help the poor. G's answer was that nothing could be done until the present government was overthrown and the land seized from the deshmuchs (landlords). As we finally rose to go, G. and the others said they were delighted we had come and hoped that we could continue the discussion later. We left wondering whether the friendly and tolerant Communist was not perhaps the most unscrupulous of all.

We also visited two villages in the district and talked at length with Christians and Hindus. One of the villages lay in a shallow valley, almost entirely surrounded by low, rocky hills. For two years these hills served as hiding places for the Communists who several times looted the homes of rich landlords. We had never before seen such pathetically poor and ignorant people as in these two villages. Most of the land is owned by a few landlords, while the Christians and others work as their coolies. The average pay is Rs. 12-15 for the men, and 2 to 3 annas a day for women and children. Boys start working in the fields at the age of 6 or 7. There are government primary schools, but the outcastes, including the Christians, often find it difficult to attend. We asked some of the Christian men whether they had gained anything from the elections. "Nothing at all", said one, as the others nodded agreement, "even the rains have been less this year". This gives an accurate picture of their intellectual and political maturity. All of them had voted for the PDF simply because that is what they had been told to do. But since the elections no one had done a thing for them. We asked what they would do if there were another election in six months, and they shrugged their shoulders "We wouldn't vote". We asked why they did not organise and go on strike for higher wages. Surely if they refused to work, the landlords would be forced to pay them more. "But we have food for only two or three days", they replied, "and the landlords can wait for weeks". What they wanted from the government, they said, was first of all higher wages, and secondly land of their own. They needed the wages first because at the moment they did not have the money with which to buy bullocks and ploughs to till the land.

We had an interesting insight into Communist tactics when we talked with the leading landlord of one village, a man with an unsavoury record for cruelty and exploitation. During the elections he had campaigned vigorously for the PDF, evidently hoping to win the favour of the Communists and to knife some of his personal enemies who were in the Congress. But now he was bitter about the PDF. "Sab chor hain, sab badmash" (All are thieves and rascals") he said again and again. Evidently the

When the Party's tactics changed, he was put up as the People's Democratic Front candidate and won by a large majority over his Congress rival. G. was most cordial and invited us to meet six PDF workers who were seated around a lantern on the floor of the small office. For the next hour and a half we discussed Communist policy on land reform, linguistic provinces and religion. With regard to the last of these, G. said, "The Party's aim is food, shelter and clothing for all - and we do not worry about a man's religion, except where religion is used as an excuse to support reactionary social practices." He told us that he had a high respect for Christians because they served the poor. "Communists and missionaries are doing much the same work," he said, "You and I can travel a long way together - and leave the problems of philosophy until later." I questioned this and said that I did not see how a Christian could be a Communist because the Communist owes his complete loyalty to the Party. To which G. replied, "My loyalty is to the people, not to the Party". "But the Party is the vanguard of the proletariat", I quoted, "and it alone knows what is right". G. smiled, but did not challenge the point. He then asked whether I thought the Dean of Canterbury was a Christian. (Incidentally, the good Dean must be one of the most popular people in Asia today). My reply was that the Dean, while doubtless an honest man, was naive and did not consider all the facts. I then asked what the Communists were doing now to help the poor. G's answer was that nothing could be done until the present government was overthrown and the land seized from the landlords (landlords). As we finally rose to go, G. and the others said they were delighted we had come and hoped that we could continue the discussion later. We left wondering whether the friendly and tolerant Communist was not perhaps the most unscrupulous of all.

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Communists, in keeping with their united-front tactics had been willing to accept anyone in the PDF. They had made all kinds of promises to all kinds of people, but since they had failed to gain control of the State government their followers were now disillusioned and bitter. We talked also with a young Hindu who was district secretary of the PDF. We had been told that he was a landlord, so we asked him about his workers and their condition. "I have twelve coolies on my land", he said. "And what do you pay them?" "Oh, the regular wages". "You mean 12-15 rupees a month!" "Yes, that is plenty for them. They don't need anything else". At which point we found ourselves in the very interesting position of telling him that he was an exploiter and worse.

It is clear that the average villager, Hindu, Muslim or Christian, will support any party which promises him some immediate economic relief. At the moment many Telengana peasants are disillusioned and cynical about the Communists, but the Party could quickly regain their loyalty by doing something constructive for their welfare. The Communist challenge can be met only by a radical programme of land reform and by providing the peasants with the necessary implements and seeds. Obviously this is something which requires state and national legislation. But on the local level there is much which the churches can do. Christian pastors and teachers who live among the people and know their needs can champion their claims against landlords and village officials. No matter what form of legislation is enacted, the poor man will still need help to gain his rights. By such action Christians can build up confidence in constitutional government and help India avoid totalitarianism. In addition there is the very obvious need for more education. So long as village Christians remain as illiterate as those in Telengana we can expect neither an active rural Church nor an intelligent Christian participation in democracy.

UTTAR PRADESH

Communism has been active for nearly thirty years in North India, but until recently it was confined to the large industrial cities and the university centres. There is ample evidence, now, however, that Communist organisers are working in the smaller towns and villages. They are also gaining in strength among industrial workers and 'intellectuals', especially high school and college students. Christians are to be found among all these groups, and in many cases they are receptive to Communist propaganda.

We had several opportunities to talk with Christian teachers in Allahabad, and our impression was that, on the whole, they were sceptical of Communist claims and opposed to its methods. A few were prepared to give Communism the benefit of practically every doubt, especially in view of some favourable reports about China which have appeared in the Indian. press. Several persons told us that what was most needed was more factual and objective information about Communist theory and practice, that most people knew too little to make an intelligent judgment. Others insisted that any Christian approach to Communism should be 'positive', i.e., that it should not be limited to exposing Communism but present a constructive alternative as well. (We heard this point made repeatedly on our tour. It is one thing on which all Indian Christians are agreed, though there are differing interpretations of what the term 'positive' implies.)

Late in September we attended part of the annual North India Synodical Board meeting at Mainpuri. Our talks with District Superintendents, pastors and teachers confirmed the general accuracy of a report made by a previous observer (an Indian)

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after his visit to seven districts in the United Provinces last March. This observer reported that everywhere he went he found three different ways of reacting to the challenge of Communism. "Most of the poorer sections of the Christian community, including a good number of low-paid Mission workers, reacted most favourably to the Communist promise of economic justice and social equality. The American missionaries I met were definitely anti-Communist, some of them in a very negative manner. Most of the Indian leaders in between the above two groups seemed not to have made up their minds one way or the other". He also pointed out that "the group mainly composed of village evangelists, who find it difficult to make both ends meet on the salary they receive, had a really Utopian conception of Communism. Very few of them knew much of Communism or even had come into direct contact with any Communist movement. They had a false and rosy picture of the life of the people in Communist countries, e.g., the idea that there is flat equality of income in Soviet Russia. Some of them argued, "Let the Communists establish economic and social equality and then the Christians can supplement this achievement with religion". Yet others argued, "God is acting through the Communists and let us not hinder them!" - Some of them identified all criticism of Communism with Western capitalist slander. In the case of a few, their ignorance of the Communism which they welcomed was matched only by their ignorance of the Christianity which they professed".

Our conversations were mainly with the Indian District Superintendents. We were struck by the fact that any attempt on our part to discuss Communism as such was immediately side-tracked by the pressure of problems closer home. Communism was still too remote and unreal a movement for them to consider it a serious threat. At the same time, however, they felt that Communist ideals served to expose weaknesses in Christian practice. As a result of these discussions we concluded that Communism challenges the Church at three major points:

Communist insistence on the unity of thought and action reminds Christians that faith without works is dead. There has been too much talking and too little doing in all aspects of Church life.

The Communist ideal of economic equality stands in sharp contrast to the wide differences which exist in the salaries of full-time Church workers. It is not surprising that the village evangelist, with an income perhaps a tenth or less of that of an American missionary, is attracted by Communist propaganda.

The Communist ideal of brotherhood reveals the jealousies and quarrels within the Christian community. We sensed a deep hunger among those with whom we talked for genuine unity and brotherhood within the Church. One problem is the gulf which still exists between missionaries and Indians, a gulf caused in part by economic differences, and in part by the lack of full mutual trust and frankness.

During our discussions some people unfairly critized the Church and mission for not providing a practical alternative to Communism. They obviously failed to distinguish between the tasks which the Church itself can undertake and those which are the responsibility of the government or of political parties. There is need for a great deal of clear and responsible thinking as to the role which the Indian Church should play in social and economic reform.

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The following specific tasks appeared to us to deserve priority:

(a) Every effort should be made to wean the Church from its financial and psychological dependence on the mission. The Synodical Board should push ahead as rapidly as possible with its plans for developing self-support and for turning over all administrative posts to Indian leaders.

(b) Every effort should be made to build up a stronger sense of unity and brotherhood within the Christian community. If the Church is to provide an effective answer to the false community of Communism, it will be largely through the growth of closely-knit and spiritually-sensitive congregations. One practical step would be to develop more festivals and social gatherings in which all members of the congregation could take part. These would be particularly valuable for village Christians, among whom lingering caste-distinctions still create disunity. This and other practical steps need to be accompanied by a renewed emphasis in sermons, Sunday Schools and all forms of Christian education on the true nature of the congregation as the fellowship of those called to live and witness together to the love of Christ.

(c) Missionaries should radically re-examine their relations with their Indian colleagues. The style in which missionaries live, and the fact that their closest social contacts are usually with fellow-missionaries, are both hindrances to true fellowship.

(d) The Church should develop a better programme of Christian education, designed to show clearly what it means to be a Christian in this revolutionary age. There is a great need for Bible-study materials which will help Christians to see the relation of their faith to the pressing social and economic problems of India today. Such materials could be used most effectively in connection with the youth emphasis programme.

(e) The Church should select one major economic or social problem of village Christians and make a systematic effort to solve it within the next few years. Illiteracy is perhaps the most obvious problem, and is one which the Church has the resources to meet.

(f) The Church should develop one or more programmes of community service designed to assist both Christians and non-Christians. At present the Church is too in-grown, too narrowly concerned with the needs of its own members. A programme of community service could help Christians fulfill their responsibility to others, and also be an effective means of evangelism. We were glad to see that the pattern of Indian Village Service was to be adapted for this purpose.

At one Christian conference we attended there was a discussion of the role which missionaries should play in helping the Indian Church to respond to the challenge of Communism. It is clear that unless missionaries are patient, tactful, and above all sensitive to Indianattitudes and needs, they can do more harm than good. Many missionaries, particularly some of those from the United States, are politically illiterate. One glaring example of this is the tendency of many to equate Socialism with Communism and to condemn both as equally un-Christian. Some missionaries also fail to appreciate the need for a major social revolution in India, and as a result their criticism of Communism appears to be little more than reactionary hysteria. Missionaries should also remember constantly that what they say and do may prove a serious difficulty for their Indian colleagues should the Communists take over the country. For all these reasons, missionaries and mission boards must avoid any temptation to try to dominate the thinking of the Indian Church on this issue.

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On the other hand, we were impressed by the fact that the right type of missionary contribution, both in ideas and in financial help, is still welcome. Many Indian Christians are alive to the danger of Communism, and recognise that it is a world-wide problem. They would like to learn as much as possible from the experiences of Christians in other countries. They greatly appreciate well-informed American and European thinking on the relation of Christianity to society. By seeking to understand the true nature of the revolutionary social forces at work in India today, and by attempting to bring the best of Christian insights to bear on these problems, missionaries can aid their Indian colleagues to respond as Christians to the challenge of the total revolutionary situation, of which Communism is only the most dangerous symptom.

The Strength and Strategy of Communism Today

During the General Elections the Communists won 26 seats in the House of the People and 173 in the State Legislative Assemblies. They and their allies now form the principal opposition in the Union Parliament, and in the states of Madras, Hyderabad, West Bengal and Travancore-Cochin. However, in terms of percentage of the total votes cast, their strength was less than that of the Socialists and roughly equal to that of the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party. The following chart gives statistics for the four major parties.

	Percentage of Votes Polled		Percentage of Seats Won	
Party	State Assemblies	House of the People	State Assemblies	House of the People
Congress	42.36	45.01	68.5	74.0
* Socialists	9.73	10.5	3.9	2.5
* K.M.P.P.	5.1	5.87	2.3	2.2
Communists	5.84	5.06	5.2	5.5

* The Socialists and the K.M.P.P. recently merged to form the Praja-Socialist Party

The Communist victories were limited to areas, such as the Telegu-speaking areas of Madras and Hyderabad, where they had been working intensively for several years. In many States they polled few votes and won no seats. In the whole of North India they won only 6 seats, all of them in the Panjab.

Although the Communist Party of India obtains its major strategy from the Cominform, its tactics are modelled after those of the Chinese Communists. The Chinese "formula for victory" was spelled out at a Trade Union Conference in Peking in November 1949, and applied in India in 1950 after the C.P.I. had been officially rebuked by the Cominform for its "left-wing adventurism" (i.e., its campaign of violence against the Congress government). "The task of the Indian Communists", said the official Cominform journal, "drawing on the experience of the national liberation movement in China and other countries, is, naturally, to strengthen the alliance of the working class with all the peasantry, to fight for the introduction of urgently needed agrarian reforms and - on the basis of a common struggle for freedom and national independence of their country, against the Anglo-American imperialists oppressing it and against the reactionary big bourgeoisie and feudal princes collaborating with them - to unite all classes, parties, groups and organisations willing to defend the national independence and freedom of India."

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So far as we can tell, this is still the major directive guiding the tactics of the C.P.I. It is the old united-front technique designed to bring as many groups as possible under Communist leadership. The common enemy is the West, especially America: the common ideal is the new China. The Communists are using every device at their command to try to prove that India's problems would be solved if it followed China's example.

In supporting this united-front policy the CPI makes at least four major claims regarding Communism: (a) Communism is true nationalism. The Party is now making an all-out bid to win every disillusioned nationalist and to pose as the true champion of Indian freedom against the subtle pressures of Western imperialism. They are handicapped in this appeal because of their previous anti-nationalistic record. During World War II they followed the Comintern line and supported the British against Japan, while Gandhi, Nehru and other Congress leaders were in jail. One of the most frequent charges against them is that they were traitors to the country. Now they are trying to recover lost ground by discrediting the Congress and claiming that under its administration India is still subservient to the Western powers. They bitterly attack the Point-Four programme, the hiring of foreign specialists for India's construction projects, the granting of special terms to foreign industries, and the recruitment of Gurkha soldiers by the British army. All these signs of 'imperialism' would be done away with, they say, if the Communists had power. (b) Communism is Gandhism in Practice. This is one of the most subtle and powerful of the Communist claims. It appeals to the frustrated idealism of many who believed that independence would be accompanied by an immediate improvement in India's social and economic conditions. Disillusioned by the achievements of Congress, they look inquiringly and hopefully to Communism as the means to put Gandhi's teachings into practice. Recently Shanker Rao Deo, a Secretary of the Congress Party, said that "Communism, shorn of its cult of violence, is nothing but Gandhism, and aspires for the same ideas and the same ideals as Gandhism". Dr. J.C. Kumarappa, for many years one of Gandhi's closest associates, returned from China with high praise for its achievements. "We have a great many things to learn from the Chinese", he wrote, "in economic life, social organisation and state craft". The Communist "renunciation" of violence in 1950, and their peace campaign during the past two years make this claim more credible in the eyes of many Indians. (c) Communism grants complete religious freedom. The Communists know that one of the most damaging charges against them in the eyes of Indians is their atheism and record of religious persecution in Russia. For this reason they have played down their anti-religious propaganda, and claim (as did the Communist leader with whom we talked in Telengana) that they have no objection to any religion so long as it does not support reactionary social practices. Standard Communist materials, such as the compilation of Lenin's articles on "Religion", have apparently been withdrawn from public sale, though they were available three to four years ago. They have been replaced by such booklets as "Christ in Moscow", "Freedom of Religion in the U.S.S.R.", and the works of Hewlett Johnson. (d) Communism champions the cause of any oppressed group. The Communists have sought to win the support of many disgruntled and restless groups in the country. In Bengal and in the Panjab they have loudly championed the rights of refugees from Pakistan - conveniently sidestepping the fact that in 1946 they vigorously supported the Muslim League in its demand for a separate State. In South India they have exploited the anti-Hindi agitation and led the dangerously divisive movement for linguistic provinces. In Assam they have organised hill tribes to fight for their autonomy against the Central Government. In the Panjab they have won considerable support among the Sikhs, many of whom are bitter against what they consider the betrayal of their interests by the Congress. They are now courting Master Tara Singh, leader of the rabidly communal Akali Dal, by proposing that they will support the cause of the Sikh religious community if he will urge his followers to support Communism.

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The over-all aim of this policy is to "soften up" Indian public opinion - to win as much support as possible and weaken resistance. There are many signs that the policy has been effective. Besides the convinced Communists and fellow-travellers there are many educated Indians who feel that Communism should be given a chance to show what it can do for the country. Others look upon Communism as inevitable, and are afraid to oppose it. But it is also true that many Indians, some of them in high places in the Government, have no illusions about Communist aims. The most prominent of these is Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Chief Minister of Madras State, who has repeatedly called the Communist Party "India's Public Enemy Number 1". Several of the leading English dailies, e.g., "The Times of India", "The Hindu", and "The Statesman", carry a good deal of information about Communism, and articles and editorials critical of it. The "Democratic Research Service", a private organisation in Bombay affiliated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom, has published a series of booklets exposing Communist aims and tactics in India. Some of the ablest and most forceful critiques of Communism come from the other left-wing parties, notably the Socialists.

Conclusions

1. Indian Communism is strong, but it would be a dangerous mistake to over-estimate its power. Democratic political alternatives, especially the Congress and the Praja-Socialist parties, still command far greater popular support than do the Communists. If the Congress administration can remain moderately honest, and if it can prove its ability to tackle some of the major economic problems, India has a more than even chance of avoiding totalitarianism.

2. Communism is one symptom of a deep spiritual problem. It is true that part of the answer to Communism lies in helping to improve India's economy and to raise the standard of living of her people. Both radical social reforms and material aid from abroad are needed for this purpose. Yet many people, especially the uprooted intellectuals, are hungry not only for bread but even more for truth, justice and genuine community. For some of them Communism provides a faith by which they can guide their lives. If democrats are to win the day over the followers of totalitarianism, they must rediscover and articulate the spiritual foundations of their political convictions. They must be able to present a message about human life and destiny which will satisfy the minds, appeal to the hearts and fire the wills of sensitive Indians.

3. There is a wide variety of Christian opinion about Communism. In South India many educated Christians are favourably impressed by Communism, but equally as many are disillusioned after cooperating with it. Most educated Christians in North India are poorly informed, and few have had close contacts with the Communists. Some disgruntled Christians support Communism in order to needle the missionaries or Indian Church leaders. Village Christians, whether in the South or North, are politically illiterate, and most of them are prepared to support any movement which promises them relief from their poverty. The Church should recognize that there are honest differences of opinion and not allow these to destroy Christian fellowship.

4. There is need for wide-spread information about the true nature of Communism. This information will be most effective if it comes primarily from Indian sources, and if it deals also with positive answers to the problems which Communism pretends to solve. Missionaries need to be patient and sympathetic to Indian attitudes, and should make every effort to become better informed about Indian political and social conditions.

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5. Missions and churches should do much more to help solve the economic and social problems of village Christians. Adult literacy campaigns, technical training for boys and girls, the formation of village cooperatives - these and other practical programmes need to be developed.

6. Most Christians are poorly informed about the social implications of the Gospel. Christian instruction in India has been limited mainly to individual devotional life. There is a great need for literature which will help Christians to see the relation of their faith to the pressing social and economic problems of India today. There is also the need for basic political education so that Christians can take part as Christians in the life of the new Republic.

7. The true Christian response to Communism will be the response of a self-supporting united and witnessing Church. Only such a Church can demonstrate that quality of Christian fellowship which is the one effective answer to the false community of Communism. Our major aims, therefore, should be to wean the churches from their financial dependence on the West, to press ahead for full Church union, and to build up spiritually-sensitive congregations of those called to live and witness together to the love of Christ.

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II

A REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF THE CHURCH IN CHINA

News of Churches

Earlier correspondence has referred to the dearth of news of the churches. This condition continues to prevail.

The Church of Christ in China-Resist America-Aid Korea-Three Selves Movement-Preparatory-Committee (more generally known as the Three Selves' Committee) dominates in higher affairs of the churches. This committee serves as the liaison between the church bodies and the government bureau of Religious and Cultural Affairs. Mr. Y. T. Wu is the head of this committee and wields a very great influence. The NCC has practically ceased to exist except to act as custodian of the Missions building and the matters pertaining thereto. Not only is the Three-Selves' Committee the official body for dealing with the government in matters pertaining to the internal life of the churches but it also handles property arrangements between missions and church bodies. Missionaries who have recently come out have had to make their final financial settlements for their missions with a sub-committee of the Three-Selves Committee. This Committee has its headquarters in Shanghai with regional representatives in other cities and areas.

A missionary who recently came from Shanghai writes as follows in regard to church life in Shanghai:

"In Shanghai, church attendance is good, and especially so where pastors preach Gospel sermons. I learn that Pentecostal-type churches are doing well. Where pastors try to blend a good deal of politics with their preaching, congregations tend to drop off. It seems intolerable to some that the pervading political pressures

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should be manifested even in divine worship. There are indications that this tendency is known to the authorities, and recently it is learned that pastors were advised not to make their sermons "half religion and half politics". Political references if made should be made in a natural manner. Fifteen churches in Shanghai recently held a week of evangelistic services, and I learn that some of these were very well attended and produced a good response. There is no interference with Protestant church services. This freedom to worship is however the only freedom the church enjoys. Individual Christians often find that their religion is a disability when applying for jobs, etc.

"As regards the property gifts which the mission boards seek to make to the Chinese Church, the general pattern seems to be that the Church may receive actual church buildings, etc. but properties capable of earning rent-income are administered by the House Letting Bureau. Where churches do receive such gifts, the recipients do not feel that the property is necessarily theirs for "keeps". As the constantly changing situation develops, new policies are apt to be produced by the Central authorities.

"Chinese churches are now exempt from taxes, the exemption extending also to church offices, etc.

"I have no information as to how the churches are making out financially. Presumably in city churches the giving has been increased sufficiently to support the pastor. Increased giving is one of the pledges in the Patriotic Pacts which most churches have signed.

"Pledged as the Christian groups are to "oppose America and Aid Korea", they have taken part in 'Planes and Artillery' drives for funds; protested against germ warfare; against the alleged brutal treatment of prisoners by the United Nations; supported Hewlett Johnson, and protested against his 'persecution' by the 'British Ruling Classes'. On the internal front they have taken part in accusation meetings against foreign missionaries and Chinese personnel associated with them, sent deputations to study Land Reform; and now are preparing for Thought Reform and study of the Common Programme. Churches were closed in areas where Land Reform has been carried out. In East China it is believed that the majority have now reopened.

"A year or two ago, the feeling was sometimes expressed that soon pressures would slacken and the churches would have a better time. I should not think that such opinions are very common now. The expectation is for one pressure after another, one campaign after another, with further 'testing' of the reality of the Christian faith.

"In some circles there has been a deepening of faith and a greater recourse to Bible study and prayer. How widespread this is I have no means of knowing."

The Synod organisation of the Church of Christ has continued to function. There has been pressure upon the Synod to hold accusation meetings but so far none have been held within the churches themselves. Yenching University is of course another story. Dr. T.C. Chao is reported to have been forced to make harsher statements against former colleagues and himself in his confessions and yet has failed to satisfy his accusers who include students of the seminary. He is said to have been deprived of his church offices and his right to clerical orders is under attack. A distressing feature of Chancellor Lu Chih-wei's ordeal is that his only daughter joined the ranks of his accusers and made a virulent attack upon him. Representatives of the

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Synod have been absent on Land Reform for several months. The numerous meetings with required attendance have reduced the size of the church congregations. Young folks have been especially forced to be absent to attend political meetings. Pastor Wong Ming-tao, an independent evangelist, has maintained a very large congregation and has preached a very clear-cut Gospel message. The Bible classes in some churches are well attended. In these classes political discussion can be avoided. In some churches apparently the pastor can escape devoting time to a "True News" presentation and leaves this task to a member of the church. Congregations are receiving certificates showing that they have no connection with foreigners. An increasing number of religious services are being held in homes and young people can often be found attending these services. Special evangelistic meetings outside the churches are not permitted. In the country districts the churches continue their work and life and reports indicate that in other parts of the country churches which were closed during Land Reform have been permitted to reopen.

The churches in Canton city are maintaining their attendance although the record differs from church to church. In some cases attendance has fallen somewhat. In other cases it has risen. The pastor of one large church preaches sermons that draw increasing numbers. One of the difficulties faced in the churches is the frequent demand for the use of the premises by various organisations and groups having government backing. In Canton as elsewhere the churches are discouraged from holding evangelistic meetings outside their church premises. Some of the schools are now holding their religious activities in the churches since the regulations of the government do not permit religious exercises or teaching in the schools. The churches as well as schools have found that memorial tablets are anathema when they have reference to foreigners. One church was given a brief time in which to dig out the memorial tablet from the wall of the church and members spent a whole night digging out the large tablet which was imbedded in cement in the wall of the church. The financial support of the churches in Canton as well as elsewhere is becoming a major problem due to the fact that the income of the church members has greatly diminished. Church members come largely from the class of the people which has suffered most in the disorganisation of commerce and industry during the past year.

News of the Institutions

The reconstruction of Christian institutions into the pattern desired by the government continues. Every attempt is being made to destroy the evidences of previous connection with foreigners. One method is by integrating these institutions into the new educational programmes. Ginling and Nanking Universities are now amalgamated and redivided into eight branch colleges. Dr. Wu I-fang is head of the division called Nanking Normal College. The Christian Universities in Shanghai are being absorbed in this way. St. John's University was to be a medical college. Later reports stated that it is to be a political training centre. Most of the books in its library have been sold as old paper. Shanghai University is to become a workers' College. The Christian middle schools have lost their identity and former names and now bear numerical designations as part of the educational system of the city.

In Peking a great educational centre is being developed to the west of the city and will absorb Yenching and Tsing Hua. The Catholic University in Peking has been abolished by an official order of the Department of Education. The Vice Minister of Education said that "this university will be abolished forever". The middle Christian schools continue under Boards of Directors largely chosen by the government.

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Few of the schools continue under their old names. The enrollment has increased in many schools. In one institution the Principal still carries on morning prayers in the school. A large group of young folks recently held a conference of almost two weeks' duration during which they gave their time almost exclusively to Bible study. The property of middle schools in Peking has not been disturbed by the government, but whether such properties will be permitted to remain under full control of the schools is doubtful.

In Canton the Christian middle schools have in many cases been taken over by the government and remodelled so as to fit in to the new pattern. One school has become a normal training school, another has become a special school for the children of officials. Lingnan University has lost its identity and will be part of a larger university programme. Reports differ as to its final use but probably it will become primarily an agricultural training centre.

News of Missionaries

Although there have been a number of reports that the Communist government planned to repatriate en masse missionaries and other foreigners nothing has happened to substantiate these rumours. Missionaries continue to arrive in Hongkong from time to time, singly or in small groups. No uniform procedure in their release can be discerned. Missionaries in Shanghai have been favoured above those living in other places since they have not been subjected to house-arrest or imprisonment. However, the strain of waiting for many months to see what might happen has been great in some cases. Several missionaries arriving from Shanghai have had to wait a long time for their exit permit, in one case 20 months. Missionaries arriving from other places bring stories of house-arrest and imprisonment. One group of 4 men had been imprisoned in Kweiyang for 15 months, part of the time in solitary confinement. They reported long hours of questioning and attempts to fasten charges of spying upon them. Their prison fare had been crude at first but had improved in quality in the latter months. Apparently, improvement in the food for foreign prisoners has been true in several prisons where missionaries have been held.

While it is difficult to secure exact figures of the number of Protestant missionaries still within China the figures are approximately as follows: American Baptists 4, American Presbyterian North 7, Bible Society 2, Boat Mission 2, English Presbyterian 1, CIM 8, Lutherans 2, and Methodists 1. Doubtless the total number is well below 40. Of the 27, 6 are definitely known to be in prison and at least 16 under house-arrest of varying degrees of strictness. The Roman Catholic missionary authorities in Hongkong state that there are still approximately 825 foreign priests and nuns in China. One hundred and fifty of these are in prison. The American personnel numbers about 50 of whom one-fifth are in prison or under house-arrest. Protestant missionaries have not been subjected to as harsh treatment as many Catholic missionaries. Many of the latter have sustained bodily mistreatment having been beaten and chained and subjected to tortures.

Despite their experiences with the officialdom of the new China the missionaries who arrive in Hongkong from the mainland have an unchanged attitude toward the Chinese people and in some cases consider possibilities for further service among the people somewhere in the world even before their return home for rest and recuperation. They share the concern and disappointment arising from the reports of the actions and utterances of the prominent church leaders who have been brought to conform so subserviently to the government's desire. Yet they remain charitable in their judgments and hope that time may enable us to see more clearly and to understand more fully certain things that seem so inexplicable at the present time. They also come away from China firm in the conviction that the Church will live on in spite of its fiery trials which will burn away the dross and purify the gold.

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few of the schools continue under their old names. The enrollment has increased in many schools. In one institution the Principal still carries on morning prayers in the school. A large group of young folks recently held a conference of almost two weeks' duration during which they gave their time almost exclusively to Bible study. The property of middle schools in Peking has not been disturbed by the government, but whether such properties will be permitted to remain under full control of the schools is doubtful.

In Canton the Christian middle schools have in many cases been taken over by the government and remodelled so as to fit in to the new pattern. One school has become a normal training school, another has become a special school for the children of officials. Lingnan University has lost its identity and will be part of a larger university programme. Reports differ as to its final use but probably it will become primarily an agricultural training centre.

News of Missionaries

Although there have been a number of reports that the Communist government planned to repatriate en masse missionaries and other foreigners nothing has happened to substantiate these rumours. Missionaries continue to arrive in Hongkong from time to time, singly or in small groups. No uniform procedure in their release can be discerned. Missionaries in Shanghai have been favoured above those living in other places since they have not been subjected to house-arrest or imprisonment. However, the strain of waiting for many months to see what might happen has been great in some cases. Several missionaries arriving from Shanghai have had to wait a long time for their exit permit, in one case 20 months. Missionaries arriving from other places bring stories of house-arrest and imprisonment. One group of 4 men had been imprisoned in Kweiyang for 15 months, part of the time in solitary confinement. They reported long hours of questioning and attempts to fasten charges of spying upon them. Their prison fare had been crude at first but had improved in quality in the latter months. Apparently, improvement in the food for foreign prisoners has been true in several prisons where missionaries have been held.

While it is difficult to secure exact figures of the number of Protestant missionaries still within China the figures are approximately as follows: American Baptists 4, American Presbyterian North 7, Bible Society 2, Boat Mission 2, English Presbyterian 1, CIM 8, Lutherans 2, and Methodists 1. Doubtless the total number is well below 40. Of the 27, 6 are definitely known to be in prison and at least 16 under house-arrest of varying degrees of strictness. The Roman Catholic missionary authorities in Hongkong state that there are still approximately 825 foreign priests and nuns in China. One hundred and fifty of these are in prison. The American personnel numbers about 50 of whom one-fifth are in prison or under house-arrest. Protestant missionaries have not been subjected to as harsh treatment as many Catholic missionaries. Many of the latter have sustained bodily mistreatment having been beaten and chained and subjected to tortures.

Despite their experiences with the officialdom of the new China the missionaries who arrive in Hongkong from the mainland have an unchanged attitude toward the Chinese people and in some cases consider possibilities for further service among the people somewhere in the world even before their return home for rest and recuperation. They share the concern and disappointment arising from the reports of the actions and utterances of the prominent church leaders who have been brought to conform so subserviently to the government's desire. Yet they remain charitable in their judgments and hope that time may enable us to see more clearly and to understand more fully certain things that seem so inexplicable at the present time. They also come away from China firm in the conviction that the Church will live on in spite of its fiery trials which will burn away the dross and purify the gold.

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III.

AN IMPORTANT BOOK ON THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD COMMUNISM

(The following is a review of the significant book by Professor H. Gollwitzer "Und führen wohin du nicht willst, Bericht einer Gefangenschaft" published in Germany last year. This book has been widely read and discussed in European Christian groups and we present a review of it by Pastor J.J. Buskes, of Holland. This review originally appeared in the Dutch magazine Wending, October 1952, as part of a longer review of Christian literature on Communism).

"Und führen wohin du nicht willst, Bericht einer Gefangenschaft" is the title of the book by Helmut Gollwitzer (Kaiserverlag, München, 1951, 240 pages). Gollwitzer was taken prisoner by the Russians on May 10th, 1945. He is convinced that everything that happened to him during his captivity was due to the fact that he permitted the uniform of Hitler to be put on him. He did not permit this with a bad conscience, nor out of weakness. He did not feel a vocation to take a different road. That uniform was a burden for him, but he also profited by it, then the bill was presented to him.

On new Year's eve, 1949 he was back in West Germany: "Jetzt kann die kalte Hand nicht mehr zupacken, jetzt ist der Eiserne Vorhang dazwischen", (Now the cold hand can no longer grab, now the Iron Curtain is in between) he said to a companion, as they embraced each other. He had spent nearly five years in Russian captivity.

His book, which has as its theme, John 21:18, tells of these five years of captivity. He wrote it in a few weeks of vacation: "Of necessity it has become in parts a political book. One cannot avoid political judgments when one reports about a period of one's life spent in the Soviet-Union. One has merely a choice between explaining them briefly or at greater length. I have chosen the latter way. For some this account will be too negative, for some, not negative enough. He for whom Communism has never been a problem will, rubbing his hands, declare that he was right in his rejection of it. For him my exposition is of no value. However, all those who cannot dismiss this exciting phenomenon so easily, who are drawn to it by hopes, because they cannot acquiesce in the injustice and exploitation on this earth, were before my eyes during my Russian years as questioners to whom one day I would have to give information about what I had found there".

It is indeed a book for those who are fascinated by Communism.

In the first part of the book Gollwitzer tells of the early period of his captivity. In the second part we find political interpretations based upon a very thorough knowledge of the Communist and Marxist literature and its practice as Gollwitzer came to know it. In the last part the stay in the Siberian camps with its innumerable interrogations, the country and the people are described.

Gollwitzer became professor of systematic theology in Bonn in 1950. A more systematic exposition of his thoughts about Communism is found in two articles written by him: "Der Christ zwischen Ost und West" ("Evangelische Theologie", Oct. 1950) and "Christentum und Marxismus" ("Unterwegs", 1952, Heft 1).

One cannot say that Gollwitzer's book is merely a book about Communism. It can just as rightly be considered as devotional reading in the best sense of the word, a book full of consolation and strengthening of faith. Many pages are

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nothing but the meditations of one who in distress realises the essential content of his faith. Anyone wishing to read some truly devotional literature for the deepening of his religious life should possess this book. In this article however we are interested in Gollwitzer's views on Communism. He speaks about the problem on the basis of his own personal experiences. Five years he fought to preserve humanness - being human . The book contains two dialogues, an outward one recording the facts and the events, and parallel to it an inward one in which the writer confronts the content and vigour of his faith with this reality of life and death, earth and hell, in which he keeps his faith alive and affirms it. His faith in Jesus Christ enables him to maintain himself as man. In this way his entire book is a description of his struggle for man. This struggle itself, the means by which it is fought, the downfalls, the defeats, but also the victories, these all are described by Gollwitzer in a very penetrating and original way, from theological, psychological and sociological points of view. Throughout all these pages the convincing voice of evangelical liberty is heard. One can also say that the entire book is dominated by the fascinating dialogue between Christian faith and the spirit of the age, in this case Russian Communism, a dialogue held not in the study, but in hard reality, a conversation to the death. Reading this book I have felt and experienced something of a liberation from the shackles with which Communism holds man.

It is not a simple matter to summarise Gollwitzer's interpretation of Communism. His book is a diary and he makes his observations about Communism as marginal notes on experiences and conversations in his captivity. He is interested in Marxism as an organised historical force, the historical form which it has found in Leninism and Stalinism. This Marxism says No to Christianity and not only to historical Christianity. It believes that every religion alienates man from himself.

It is a terrible fact that when Communists reject Christianity they do so with the same good conscience as people expose a swindler. Behind the banner of the Church with the loving and suffering face of Jesus Christ they see totally different faces hiding themselves, faces of men whose aim is to prevent mankind from seeing things as they are, so that it will content itself with an illusion, while they enrich themselves at the expense of the rest of mankind. If the Church is ever to open the eyes of the Communists to the true nature of Christianity, she must take care that such faces do not hide themselves behind her banner. Therefore she must distrust all who call her to an alliance against Communism. The Church has failed. She has not been the Church which brings a challenge to the world and pleads for the outcasts of the earth. She has been more concerned for her security than for her purity. She has sanctioned the status quo.

But even so Marxist Communism's negation of Christianity has a deeper basis than the historical failure of the Church. Communist atheism is a heritage of modern thinking. Therefore the Church which does not fail in its duty will also be the target of the implacable enmity of Marxist Communism. This enmity is ultimately based upon the nature of the Church. There is not only Marxism's No to the Church, but also the Church's No to Marxism. The Church recognises in Marxism a new lie of the old serpent, a new attempt of man to be his own god, or to use the words of Marx, to be "sich selbst das höchste Wesen" (the highest being to oneself).

The Church has to accept many of the ideas of Marx: his analysis of the reality of the class-struggle and the destructive tendencies of capitalistic society, his criticism of unrealistic idealism, his uncovering of the truth, that our thinking and judgments are conditioned by our belonging to a special class, his emphasis upon the basic materialistic motives in history which are so often neglected.

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Gollwitzer recognises the elements of truth in historical materialism. However, he rejects Marxism as such.

Marxism promises the redemption of man, so that he may find his true destiny, and life will make sense at last. Man shall redeem himself by transforming social relationships.

The question of the meaning of life for the individual is for the Marxist a typical Christian and individualistic question, which has to be eliminated,, because its presupposition is faith in God, in whom the meaning of that life is sought. The Marxist denies God. For him the world is the absolute. The metaphysical question about the meaning of life is ruled out and changed into the practical question of whether a man in his short individual lifetime can be meaningfully incorporated into the course of historical development. The meaning of life for the man of today is, that someday mankind will be truly human. This is the so-called Soviet-Humanism, which at one and the same time glorifies and despises man.

Gollwitzer discovers on all sorts of occasions, that this Soviet-Humanism consists of contempt for the actual man of today for the sake of future mankind. The most unhuman statement of Marx according to him is that with the coming of Communist society the prehistory of man has come to an end, and the real history of mankind has begun. In this way history has been historized without any restriction. It becomes merely past. In this way it also becomes clear, how much the true relation to history, as a conversation with history, is connected with the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ. Here we realise something of the irreconcilable contradiction between Christian and Marxist anthropology. To put it very forcefully, it is not compassion for the actual worker of today which is fundamental, but the obsession with the idea of future man, just as Hitler did not love the real Germany, but the Germany of his imagination, for which he was willing to sacrifice the real Germany. So the proletariat becomes a means of power for those who are obsessed with the idea of future man. For the sake of this idea they are willing to sacrifice the proletariat. The idea sanctifies every means and the means corrupt the goal, so that the power which supposedly serves the idea, has long since become in reality the goal, and so likewise the idea has long since served the power and has been deformed for its purposes.

The decisions and convictions of others are no longer of value in themselves, but are valued exclusively from the view-point of their effect. Lenin says that it is permissable and imperative to accuse a man of treason, if his deeds give support to the enemy objectively, even if subjectively he did not intend to be a traitor. This basic conception has the abominable consequences which are evident in the polemics of the Communists and the liquidation of their adversaries. Every real human contact is absent, likewise every respect for the other person. Spiritual life under Communism is by necessity barren, because spiritual life is only possible in "Selbst-verantwortung" (personal responsibility). A prison of the spirit arises. The total state is demonic. The hand with which it seeks to possess the soul of man is the hand of the devil. The most essential thing, our relation to the absolute, is no longer our own affair, but the affair of the party and the state. Spiritual life remains in complete slavery. Gollwitzer says of present-day Russia, as he has come to know it: "Das Leichentuch des dialektischen Materialismus lieg über diesem Land. Es ist ein wirkliches Leichentuch" (The pall of dialectical Materialism lies over this country. It is a true pall). Humaneness cannot be motivated naturalistically.

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He who does not see man in relation to God, loses man. The Church has to condemn Marxist Communism but this condemnation should be difficult for her. Those who do not find this condemnation difficult are the ones against whom Marxist Communism is still in the right. A No to Communism which is not difficult for us is certainly not a Christian no.

We must never forget that this Communism pretends to conquer human injustice. The moral pathos still works, the No should be difficult for us, because it should not be a Yes to Anti-communism. The elements of truth in the Communist criticism of the Anti-communist front are indeed numerous. The Church must moreover be conscious of her own failure in the face of the injustice in the world. Her No should not be a condemnation from fear or ermity. She has to pronounce it for the sake of the Communists. Therefore this No cannot mean an unqualified Yes to the West. Gollwitzer chooses the West. How could he choose differently? He belongs to the West and he is fully convinced that this tie is a bond which we are never allowed to forget. Our political responsibility is determined by it.

The attitude of a Christian in the West should therefore be different from the attitude of a Christian in the East. The attitude of the latter cannot be our own, any more than we can demand that his attitude should be identical with ours. For us it is impossible to say that the actual atheism of the West and the theoretical atheism of the East are equally impious, and that therefore there is no difference between the West and the East. There is most definitely a difference. The West is a temptation to brutality, but the system of the East compels brutality. The temptation can be a greater danger. Under compulsion it is possible to keep more humaneness than under temptation. Temptation can be a greater corruption than compulsion. But the man in prison is not going to let his love of liberty be taken away from him by people who point to the moral dangers of liberty. Those who experience the purifying influence of suffering on a sick-bed nevertheless long to be restored to health.

The West has failed. Russia represents a call to acknowledge its guilt. But this cannot and should never mean that we should not see that Russia by abandoning liberty has also sacrificed justice. Russian Communism is not Socialism. Real penitence for the West should never imply that we fail to see this or that we forget or minimize the differences. In the West justice for the individual is still basic - more important than daily bread. In the West there is still liberty for the individual independence of the arbitrariness of other men. Our "Selbstverantwortung (personal responsibility) is not yet denied to us in principle. We are still free to fight for social progress.

We certainly are not justified in boasting of these spiritual attainments, but it would be ungrateful to deny them or to hold them cheap.

Therefore we cannot hope that the West will become Communist.

If God should allow that to happen, we would have no cause to complain. It would be a deserved judgment. We are, however, not allowed to long for this judgment and still less to cooperate in its coming. We have to do our utmost to avert it by honouring all that is good in the West.

At this point Gollwitzer asks the fundamental question of whether we are allowed to defend that good against Russia. He recalls Isaiah, who condemned the defence of Jerusalem against Nebuchadnezzar as sinful opposition to the judgment

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of God. However, he asks himself, who of us has the prophetic authority to address as Isaiah did those who are responsible for the defence of the West.

So he chooses the West, but this Yes means for him merely a Yes to all the attainments which God in his patience has still left to us. We are not allowed to say Yes to the West without any reservations. We do not say Yes to the West as it is at the moment. Nor do we want the West to remain as it is. A relentless criticism of the West is demanded, but this criticism can never mean that we set our foot upon the road to the East. Exactly for that reason we cannot accept every means and every ally in the defence of the West.

What Gollwitzer wants to say is clear. The choice of the East has by necessity a totalitarian character. The choice for the West is a relative one, even though it is absolutely commanded. It is not a choice for a system: laissez-faire liberalism, capitalism, colonialism, the total or semi-Fascism of Franco or South-Korea. It is a choice of the possibilities which are still left to us to resist all that. The abuses which we fight against do not imply the rejection of the West itself. Thus our choice for the West is not negative and barren Anti-Communism.

Gollwitzer will have none of a universal Anti-Communist front. In its propaganda he merely sees our unregenerateness, and moreover a preparation for Fascism. Anti-Communism makes our defence, in Christian terms, not worthy of belief. Anti-Communism continuously runs the risk of becoming itself totalitarian and of losing liberty itself in its defence of liberty. It thinks and judges in an unreal white-black scheme and in an unbiblical friend-enemy category. Essentially it is a fruit of fear.

Fear makes us believe that if Communism comes we shall loose everything that makes life worth living, and that the only possibilities left would be despair and suicide. If we are Christians we cannot have that fear even though we understand it only too well and are only free from it, if we are delivered from it anew by thinking not of what comes, but of who comes: Jesus Christ. Outside of Christ only fear is left. We can try to take an ostrich attitude, through superficiality and self-deceit or through forced optimism but we shall not conquer our fear in that way.

He only knows liberation from that fear, who belongs to Christ, and thus knows only one goal: reconciliation with God and his fellowman, and who no longer believes that either the destruction of the Communists or their unconditional surrender is our goal. Both in the East and in the West human dignity can only be maintained in the liberty of the children of God.

The decisive question for us therefore is: What is the meaning for us of our struggle? The road to peace and reconciliation with the Communists, or the road to their liquidation? What is the Communist to us? Merely the enemy, who must be destroyed, and against whom every means is admissable? Or the man with whom we want to live, and against whom we can use only means which do not make it already impossible today to live together tomorrow? This question we shall have to answer.

The cold war becomes understandable when we see the demonic nature of fear at work on both sides of the Iron Curtain, and when we ourselves are liberated from this demonry. The shackles with which Communism binds us, must fall from us. A church, which is truly the Church of Jesus Christ, and therefore always liberated anew, will have none of a preventive war, will oppose the so-called necessary transition of the cold war into the hot war, will unmask the crusade-hypocrisy on both sides, will

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ecessity a totalitarian character. The choice for the West is a relative one, even
hough it is absolutely commanded. It is not a choice for a system: laissez-faire
iberalism, capitalism, colonialism, the total or semi-Fascism of Franco or South-
orea. It is a choice of the possibilities which are still left to us to resist all
hat. The stones which we fight against do not imply the rejection of the West
tself. Thus our choice for the West is not negative and barren Anti-Communism.

Gollwitzer will have none of a universal Anti-Communist front. In its propaganda
e merely sees our unregenerateness, and moreover a preparation for Fascism. Anti-
ommunism makes our defence, in Christian terms, not worthy of belief. Anti-
ommunism continuously runs the risk of becoming itself totalitarian and of losing
iberty itself in its defence of liberty. It thinks and judges in an unreal white-
lack scheme and in an unbiblical friend-enemy category. Essentially it is a fruit
f fear.

Fear makes us believe that if Communism comes we shall loose everything that
akes life worth living, and that the only possibilities left would be despair and
uicide. If we are Christians we cannot have that fear even though we understand it
nly too well and are only free from it, if we are delivered from it anew by thinking
ot of what comes, but of who comes: Jesus Christ. Outside of Christ only fear is
eft. We can try to take an ostrich attitude, through superficiality and self-
eceit or through forced optimism but we shall not conquer our fear in that way.
onfidence for the West and

He only knows liberation from that fear, who belongs to Christ, and thus knows
nly one goal; reconciliation with God and his fellowman, and who no longer believes
hat either the destruction of the Communists or their unconditional surrender is our
oal. Both in the East and in the West human dignity can only be maintained in the
iberty of the children of God.

The decisive question for us therefore is: What is the meaning for us of our
truggle? The road to peace and reconciliation with the Communists or the road to
heir liquidation? What is the Communist to us? Merely the enemy, who must be des-
roved, and against whom every means is admissable? Or the man with whom we want to
ive, and against whom we can use only means which do not make it already impossible
oday to live together tomorrow? This question we shall have to answer.

The cold war becomes understandable when we see the demonic nature of fear at
ork on both sides of the Iron Curtain, and when we ourselves are liberated from this
emonry. The shackles with which Communism binds us, must fall from us. A church,
hich is truly the Church of Jesus Christ, and therefore always liberated anew, will
ave none of a preventive war, will oppose the so-called necessary transition of the
old war into the hot war, will unmask the crusade-hypocrisy on both sides, will

further possibilities to eliminate the crusts of conflict, will fight against the suspicious power of prestige-motives.

What I write down here so calmly is in Gollwitzer's book the result of many hard and bitter experiences, long-lasting contact with Communists, profound study of Communist literature, daily association with the Bible, and an uninterrupted struggle for faith and for humanity.

I am fascinated by Communism. I believe the same can be said of Gollwitzer, only more so. But he gained liberation for himself. One could also say that God liberated him. I would prefer to say the former because I fear a too easy edification, which reassures all of us too prematurely. We shall have to fight for our liberation.

What will be the significance of this liberation? That we shall see through Communism and shall be saved from the demonry of fear, or to say it somewhat more soberly: that we shall be saved from the compulsion of fear. That we shall begin to understand that ultimately Communism can neither save us nor destroy us because we are allowed to live in the liberty of the children of God.

Christian life is never a possession which we have to defend, nor a possession which can be taken away from us. It can only be lived in a life in which faith means the imitation of Jesus Christ. Gollwitzer speaks in this connection of an unselfish sacrifice.

This is the truth which Gollwitzer urges upon us in the West: the Christianity of the West cannot be defended, merely lived.

I do not maintain that I am no longer fascinated. But I certainly do maintain that this truth is liberating, or more accurately, can be liberating.

How shall we liberate the West in such a way, that together with it the East is also liberated? I believe that this is only possible if we begin to understand the word of Paul and to live by this word: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God". The words from the Bible at the end of this article are not meant to be reassuring, but rather disturbing. Therefore I add two quotations from Gollwitzer's diary: "Haben die Kommunisten nicht vielfach Recht mit dem, was sie gegen den Westen sagen? Dieser Westen müsste ganz anders sein, als er ist, um als Befreier auftreten zu können. Ich weiss sicher, dass der Kreuzzug immer eine Heuchelei und der Krieg nie ein Befreier ist". "Are the Communists not often right in what they say against the West? This West would have to be quite different from what it is, to be able to act as a liberator. I am sure that the crusade is always an hypocrisy, and war never a liberator".

"Es liegt nun an uns, zu zeigen, dass das Christentum nicht eine klassengebundene Stütze der Reaktion, d.h. der am Bestehenden interessierten Kräfte ist, dass die Kirche sich von ihrer Klassenbindung die ja leider kein Märchen ist, frei zu machen weiss, dass unser Nein zum Marxismus seinem Messianismus meint and nicht seine gesellschaftliche Revolution. Sie haben bisher nur unser Nein gehört, nichts als Nein von uns. Sie sehen, dass die Kirche in ihrer grossen Mehrheit nur zu ihnen leidenschaftlich Nein sagte, aber nicht ein ebenso leidenschaftliches Nein zum Bestehenden mit aller seiner Ungerechtigkeit. Mit diesem Nein haben wir ihnen nicht geholfen, sondern sind ihnen das Evangelium schuldig geblieben".

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("Now it is up to us to show that Christianity is not a pillar of reaction, restricted to a certain class, i.e., to those powers which are interested in maintaining the existing order, that the Church can free herself of her class-limitation, which unfortunately is no fable, that our No to Marxism negates its messianism and not its social revolution. Until now they have heard only our No. They see, that the great majority in the Church have said No passionately only to them, but not an equally passionate No to the existing order with all its injustice. With this No we did not help them; we still owe them the Gospel").

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